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A radio talk by W. G. Campbell, Chief, Food & Drug Administration, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations, Tuesday, September 26, 1933.

I am not going to bore you today by talking to you about problems of government. I am not going to speak of economics in the abstract or of what is often pompously referred to as the public health. Instead I am going to talk with you about your own personal problems, your health, and your pocketbook.

Possibly you are one of those unfortunates who suffer from diabetes. If you have visited the exhibits at the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago, or at one of the offices of the Food and Drug Administration, you will have seen a display of dangerous and fraudulent drugs, foods, and cosmetics. Among these is a remedy for diabetes. It is the kind of remedy you would be quite likely to buy if you decided to treat your own case of diabetes on the basis of advertising claims you had read somewhere. That remedy is a concoction made from a well-known weed with the somewhat comical name of horsetail. It costs \$12 a pint. With the bottle you would get a printed sheet. Herein you would find testimonials from any number of people who declared that it had cured their diabetes. The Government made an investigation of these cases. It secured the death certificates of a considerable number of these very people who wrote testimonials to the effect that it had cured their diabetes. These people had died of diabetes. The moral of this tale is that an extract of a common weed, horsetail, prepared under the direction of an ex-shirt salesman who had no medical or drug training, is a very poor thing to take for diabetes. The only effective remedy known to medical science for that disease is insulin.

If you have diabetes you should go to a medical doctor, not to a shirt salesman. I tell you this story to emphasize the fact that under the present Food and Drugs Act it is impossible for the government to give you complete protection from the dangers of such nostrums. To be sure, the claims made on the label of this product were false and misleading. But in a case like this the government has to prove also that they are fraudulent. That, in simple, non-legal language, means that the government not only has to prove that such claims are lies but also that the manufacturer knew they were lies when he placed them on the labels of his product. It does not take a lawyer to see what a difficult job that is. That is one of the reasons why a revised form of the Food and Drug Act was prepared by the Department of Agriculture, approved by President Roosevelt, and introduced in Congress last June by Senator Copeland of New York. That bill is scheduled for consideration by the next session of Congress. Its sole purpose is to give you, as a consumer, effective protection. And, because your health and your expenditures for falsely labeled or advertised foods, drugs, and cosmetics are involved, I think you will want to become familiar with its provisions.

Let us consider this food and drug exhibit again. The newspapers have called it a chamber of horrors. The diabetes cure is prominent, to be sure, but here is a radium water, truthfully labeled yet deadly perilous to your life if clever advertising induces you to take it to cure all your ills. Here is a cosmetic that has robbed many women of their beauty by making them ill and disfiguring them for life. Here are anti-fat remedies, containing dangerous drugs

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that can easily impair your health. Here is a worthless rubber tube that looks like a tin whistle; you are supposed to blow through it, develop your lungs, and prevent consumption. You would do far better to invest in a trombone, unless the neighbors object. Here are common, ordinary, every-day Glauber's salts -- the laxative used by horses -- recommended to you to cure your stomach, liver, and kidney troubles. Here are deceptive packaged foods ready to fool you into thinking you are purchasing something more or better for your money than you really are. Why do these abuses exist? Why doesn't the government step in and stop them? Is the government really on the job any more? You have a right to ask such questions. I mean to answer them.

The original Food and Drugs Act was passed 27 years ago after ten years of heroic work by Dr. Harvey W. Wiley and his associates. Dr. Wiley himself recognized the imperfections of this law when it was passed. Twenty-seven years is quite a long time ago. The world has moved rapidly since then. The old law has worn threadbare and in many places there are loopholes. Shrewd and unscrupulous individuals have discovered many ways to get around that old law and to fool the public. They are in the minority, but they do exist and the law must be strengthened to protect consumers from their greed. During the past 27 years science has also changed the world. Even while it has given humanity many blessings, it has shown those who desire to do so how to perpetrate more subtle but certainly dangerous and wasteful frauds on the public. The old law served nobly to purge the market of the kind of useless and dangerous products so widely sold before its passage. But new concoctions have come on the market that the old law can't touch and consequently it simply must be revised in order to give you the protection to which you are entitled these modern days.

Under this revision a drug cure would be banned automatically if any claims were made for its remedial effects that were contrary to the general agreement of medical opinion.

If this bill is passed, then the government will not be required to waste time and effort showing that a particular manufacturer lied deliberately. Instead it will have only to show that the labels on his product are contrary to the consensus of medical opinion. The bill will place squarely upon the shoulders of the manufacturer the obligation of being absolutely sure that his claims agree with the consensus of medical opinion before he assumes the grave responsibility of prescribing for your and my ills. Then it will no longer be possible for reckless, ignorant, and irresponsible individuals to profit from human misery. The day of the shirt-salesman medicine-man will be ended.

I do not mean to say that all patent medicines are worthless. But the weakness of the present law even prevent the government from dealing fairly with medicines that certainly have some value but which just as certainly can not effect the cures of serious diseases often listed on their labels.

For example, here is a salve. For certain minor ills it is a perfectly good remedy. It is composed of well-known drugs, and even a doctor might advise its use in certain circumstances. The label bears a picture of a mother. She holds a child in her arms, and the trade name of the product subtly implies that this salve is the sovereign remedy for all the baby's ills. The label also reads: "For Croup, Snuffles, Colds, Coughs and Sore Throats. Frequently used in cases of Grippe, Bronchitis, Laryngitis, Tonsillitis, Pneumonia, etc. An invaluable croup mixture." Now imagine the position of a mother whose child becomes ill in the middle of the night. She has this salve. Would she or would

she not be inclined to think from the label that it was the only thing she needs for her child? Why send for a doctor with such a fine remedy on hand? Yet medical experts agreed that the sole value of this salve is to make the patient a little more comfortable. It is not a cure for any of the diseases listed. It could have little, if any, effect on the progress of the infections causing those diseases. But because the article does have some palliative value -- would make the patient more comfortable -- the label is not false within the meaning of the present law.

Suppose the sick baby had a severe sore throat. That might be a comparatively minor ill, but it might also be an early symptom of diphtheria. As diphtheria progresses it is often called membranous croup. Diphtheria may be cured by an antitoxin if it is administered in time, but delay is dangerous, often fatal. If the antitoxin is not given until the croup stage, the death rate is very high. Suppose the mother had that salve in her medicine cabinet, labeled as I have read the label. Would she or would she not be likely to delay? When she did call for assistance would or would it not be likely that she would call for an undertaker rather than a doctor?

Under the present law the government is helpless to aid that mother and protect her child. But the revised law requires that a drug product labeled with the name of any disease for which it is merely a palliative, and not a true cure, must also bear on its label the statement that it is not a cure. That statement must appear in type large enough not to be overlooked. In other words the whole truth, not just a deceptive fragment of the truth, must go on the label. In such ways as this the new bill will protect you. It will also protect honest manufacturers. It will stop adulteration and misbranding. The opportunity to adulterate and misbrand gives the unscrupulous competitor an unfair advantage in trade.

In our complex society it is also far easier to chisel consumers to the peril of their health and pocketbooks than it was in 1906. It is a proper function of government to prevent such fraud against consumers.

But a strengthened Food and Drug Act can become a reality only if you and other consumers demand it. The fate of this bill rests with you. So that you may consider the measure intelligently, and reach your own conclusions about it, I am going to give you additional facts about it in future broadcasts. If you desire to read descriptive matter about the bill, I shall be glad to have you write in for it to the Food and Drug Administration at Washington.

